

# SORE NIPPLES DURING BREASTFEEDING

Sore or painful nipples are not a normal part of breastfeeding! Mild nipple tenderness may occur at the first few days of breastfeeding. This normal tenderness should go away in a few days.

## PREVENTION

The best way to **prevent sore nipples** is to position and latch-on your baby correctly from the first day of breastfeeding.

1. You or your family should watch to see if baby's:

- ☐ Face, chest, and tummy are facing mom's body.
- ☐ Ears, shoulders, and hips are in a straight line.
- ☐ Mouth and jaw are very wide open when going to the breast, like a yawn.
- ☐ Head is allowed to slightly roll back as the baby opens wide to take a mouth full of breast.
- ☐ Nose and chin are touching the breast when latched on.
- ☐ Mouth is full of breast and baby is not feeding on the end of the nipple.



2. Place your baby's skin next to your skin to help him learn to breastfeed better.

- ☐ Use a light blanket to cover for privacy and warmth if needed.

3. Wait until your baby is an expert at breastfeeding before offering bottle or pacifier nipples.

- ☐ Babies need time to learn how to breastfeed and increase your milk.
- ☐ Bottle and pacifier nipples can cause the baby to refuse the breast.
- ☐ A baby's sucking problem at the breast can get worse if other nipples are given too early.
- ☐ If you have questions about the tenderness you are feeling with breastfeeding call for help right away!

*“Tummy to tummy, chest to chest.  
Nose and chin should touch the breast.”*

For more information, see “Sore Nipples During Breastfeeding – Treatment” on the back side.

For more help, call your county health department at \_\_\_\_\_  
or call the **Arkansas WIC Breastfeeding Helpline** at 1-800-445-6175.



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Nipples with white spots, blisters or creasing after nursing are signs of a problem. Bleeding nipples or openings in the skin can lead to a breast infection.

## TREATMENT

### Helpful things to try:

- ☐ Take a pain reliever that is safe for breastfeeding when needed (follow package instructions).
- ☐ Cover the breast with a warm wet washcloth for one to two minutes before feeding.
- ☐ Gently massage the breast, before latching the baby and during the feeding, to help the milk to flow.
- ☐ Start each feeding on the least sore breast.
- ☐ Change the baby's position each feeding to limit putting pressure on the same sore spot.
- ☐ Apply modified lanolin after nursing if desired, but avoid other creams, lotions, and oils.
- ☐ Ask your pharmacist or store about breastfeeding approved hydrogel or gel pads to help soothe and heal the nipples.

### Tips to keep breastfeeding going!

1. Sometimes nursing at the breast becomes too painful. Your breast may need time to heal.
  - ☐ Avoid nursing on one or both breasts to give time for healing.
  - ☐ Use a pump or hand-express your milk from one or both breasts while you are healing.
  - ☐ Feed your baby the milk you express with a dropper, spoon, or cup.
  - ☐ Ask your counselor how much milk to offer your baby each feeding.
  - ☐ Return to breastfeeding at one or both breasts when you feel comfortable.
2. If you don't feel well and have a temperature of 100.8 or more, call your doctor.
3. Other problems might cause nipple pain and soreness. Call your breastfeeding counselor to help you determine the cause.

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Visit our website at [www.healthyarkansas.com/breastfeeding](http://www.healthyarkansas.com/breastfeeding).